

1892-93. The $\frac{1}{4}$ Atts Surcharges. $\frac{1}{4}$ Atts on $2\frac{1}{4}$ Atts.The History of the Issue.

About October 1892 the supply of $\frac{1}{4}$ Atts stamps ran short, and it was decided to have 200,000 stamps (1667 sheets) of the $2\frac{1}{4}$ Atts value overprinted.

The Vacharindr Printing Office was commissioned to do the work and at any rate some of the stamps were returned surcharged to the Post Office on November 4th 1892. Whether the whole number was then supplied, or whether they were delivered in batches on various dates, is uncertain, but the latter seems likely.

On examination, it was found that the surcharge was in Siamese only, and that the stamps were not available for foreign postage. The stocks of the $\frac{1}{4}$ Atts value were so much depleted, however, that it was found necessary to transfer a certain proportion to the offices for immediate use, while the bulk of them were sent to the Siam Mercantile Press for the addition of an inscription in English.

In this way 12,000 stamps were issued surcharged in Siamese only, and two quite distinct types are known in this condition, each represented by several handstamps.

Type 1.Type 2.

The handstamps of Type 1 are undoubtedly the earlier, and are cut in wood, and there were at least six of them, though all of them are not at present known without an English inscription as well. Those of Type 2 are metal type fixed in a handle, and only two are known.

The difference is probably due to the fact that the woodblocks would wear out somewhat rapidly, and thus frequently need replacing. The use of metal type was doubtless a brilliant inspiration, and the woodblocks were probably immediately superseded. Both the handstamps of Type 2 were in use simultaneously, as is shewn by the fact that on some sheets part of the sheet is surcharged by one, and part by the other, handstamp.